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PRESS RELEASE

USAID assistance helps local NGO ESE conduct a key study on domestic violence in Macedonia

On November 30, 2007, the USAID Civil Society Strengthening Project (CSSP) joined one of its supported NGOs, Association of Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women (ESE), in unveiling a new study on domestic violence in Macedonia. The study reveals that half of all women in Macedonia have experienced psychological violence, while one out of five has experienced physical violence. The findings will inform the National Program for Combating Domestic Violence, prepared by ESE, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, and other state bodies, institutions and NGOs.

"Domestic violence takes place in all regions of the world – it is a violation of human rights," said U.S. Ambassador Gillian Milovanovic. "The National Program for Combating Domestic Violence will be a critical next step in creating a future framework to address this problem in Macedonia."

The research consisted of two parts. The first focused on the prevalence, forms and characteristics of domestic violence based on interviews with over 1,400 women. The second looked into the institutional response to the problem within the existing legal framework, including the Criminal Code and Law on Family.

USAID CSSP works to increase citizen participation in political and social decision-making through broadening and deepening the impact of civil society. As one of the 17 CSSP Leader NGOs, ESE receives an integrated package of grant funding, technical assistance, training and mentoring. ESE's mission is to improve the position of women in society and tackle a broad array of women's issues.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

The American people, through USAID, have invested nearly \$500 million in Macedonia since 1993. USAID is implementing projects that create jobs, reduce corruption, and prepare Macedonian students for the workforce. These initiatives improve the quality of life and support Macedonia's transition to a stable and prosperous democracy. USAID provides economic and humanitarian assistance in more than 100 countries. For more information please visit <http://macedonia.usaid.gov>.